

This reservation has been the subject of much correspondence. It has been the purpose of the Executive branch of the Government for some years to develop a water supply thereon sufficient to meet the needs and wants of the Indians for stock, agricultural, and domestic purposes. I expressed the opinion in my annual report of 1897 that with a complete system of irrigation and the development of a water supply on that reservation, the self-support and maintenance of the Navajos would be assured, because they could then engage in the pursuits of gardening and agriculture in connection with their then (and present) business, which is mainly stock raising.

The annual reports of this office for the years 1893, 1894, 1895, 1896, 1897, and 1898, together with the correspondence contained in Senate Ex. Doc. No. 68, Fifty-second Congress, second session, give a full and complete history of the matter of irrigation upon this reservation, to which your attention is respectfully invited.

Acting Indian Agent Williams, of the Navajo Agency, stated in his annual report for 1897, dated August 27, that under the new superintendent of irrigation, Mr. George Butler, the ditch of Carrizo Creek had been completed and turned over to the agent; that the ditch on Wheatfield Creek and that on Defiance Creek had just been completed, but that they had not been formally turned over; that these ditches were all constructed with suitable dams, head gates, etc., and reflected much credit upon Mr. Butler. The acting agent recommended that a further appropriation be asked for the continuance of this important work. In his annual report to this office for 1898, dated August 27, he stated that the work on the irrigation ditches had been very satisfactory during the year; that the ditches on Wheatfield, Cottonwood, and Defiance creeks had been completed according to the plans and turned over to the agent; that it was greatly to be regretted that the special appropriation asked for continuing this most important work failed of passage by Congress. He recommended that another effort be made to secure an additional appropriation, and stated that no money could be spent to more advantage for the Navajos than such as might be expended for completing the irrigation system so much needed on their arid reservation.

As the funds for irrigation on this reservation are about exhausted, Superintendent Butler was instructed some time ago to close the work thereon by June 30, 1899, if possible to do so, and to submit a report as to then necessity and practicability of further irrigation and a plan for the same. Such report has not as yet been received by this office.

Should the reservation be extended as proposed by the inspector, the Territory of Arizona could not be traversed from north to south without passing over Indian lands or a forest reserve until the extreme western portion of the Territory is reached, except at one point, a space of about 6 miles, between the Grand Canyon Reserve and the Hualapai Indian Reservation. Such fact will be observed by reference to the map of the Territory of Arizona herewith transmitted, the proposed increase of the reservation being indicated as above stated, by heavy blue penciling thereon. It hardly seems just and right to separate almost entirely the people living in Utah to the north and in central and middle Arizona by Indian and forest reserves, or at least by a further reservation of lands for Indian purposes.

Moreover, according to the report of the inspector, the tract of country to be included in the extension of the reservation consists chiefly of a light sandy soil, subject to drift with every high wind that blows. As such are frequent in that section of the country, water is scarce and grazing exceedingly poor throughout the same. Grass is at all times very scarce in this sandy desert, and but for the grease wood, sage brush, and other shrubs mentioned by the inspector the cattle and sheep could not subsist. The inspector appears to have drawn attention to these facts in two parts of his report, viz, pages 2 and 6 thereof. In consequence of the dryness of the climate and the scarcity of water he is induced to suggest, as above indicated, that Inspector Graves be directed to examine the sections of country referred to with a view to the establishment of a number of small storage reservoirs, which, if supplied with water, would enable the Indians to utilize what grass there is in that vast and extensive arid region.

It would seem from the statements contained in the inspector's said report that this tract of country is comparatively worthless. Water is scarce. There appears to be no summer grazing thereon; it seems valuable only to some extent for winter grazing. The whites in that section of country are unwilling for the reservation to be extended south or southwest of the Little Colorado River, because such extension would embrace some good grazing land. They appear to be willing, however, for the reservation to be extended as recommended by the inspector, and insist, as shown by their agreement accompanying the inspector's report, that if this is done that the Government shall keep the Indians on the north side of the river last named. It is